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Recovery of excess expenditure by the Chairman, Chidambaram Municipal Council.

*1131-D Q.—Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether any action has been taken by Government on the resolution of the municipal council, dated 31st August 1928, refusing to sanction Rs. 1,191-7-0 out of Rs. 1,589 mentioned in the revised estimate for 1927–28 as having been spent on law charges on the ground that the said amount was mis-spent;

(b) whether the scale of fees paid to the vakil who conducted the prosecution on behalf of the council against its ex-manager Doraiswami Ayyar was in accordance with or in excess of the rate specified in the Government Order relating thereto; and

(c) whether any and if so, what steps have been taken to recover from the chairman the excess amount paid by him?

A.—(a) No such resolution has been received by Government.
(b) & (c) These questions do not arise.

Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR:—"May I ask the hon. Minister to call for the information required?"

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN:—"What information?"

Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR:—"About the resolution of the Municipal Council and the action taken thereon, etc."

The hon. Dr. P. SUBBARAYAN:—"Yes, Sir. I will call for it."

Maintenance of the accounts of the Chidambaram Municipality.

*1131-E Q.—Mr. R. SRINIVASA AYYANGAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether any and if so, what action has been taken on their remarks in paragraph 66 of G.O. No. 1560, L. & M., dated 4th April 1928, that the accounts of the Chidambaram Municipality for 1926–27 'were not satisfactorily maintained';

(b) the particular heads to which those remarks apply and the amounts covered by them; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the chairman of the municipal council since nominated as a councillor sent a communication to Government some months ago that the council might be dissolved and if so, the reasons stated by him?

A.—(a) The Government have no information. They await the receipt of the report on the audit of the municipal council's accounts for the current year, 1928–29, as to whether the council has taken any steps to improve the condition of its accounts.

(b) The remarks are based on the general result of audit after a consideration of numerous details dealt with in the course of audit. The Government do not consider that any useful purpose will be furnishing these details.

(c) Yes. The reason was stated to be 'to put an end to the high-handed action and the factious spirit of the council'.

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Mr. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar :—" With reference to the answer to clause (c), may I ask the hon. Minister to state the grounds which influenced the Government to come to the decision and to place the Government Order on the table ? "

The hon. Dr. P. Subbarayan :—" Notice."

Election of a councillor to Ward No. II of the Chidambaram Municipality.

*1131-F Q.—Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai : Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the election of a municipal councillor from Ward No. II of the Chidambaram Municipality did not take place before 1st November 1928 ;

(b) whether any date was fixed for polling to elect a councillor from Ward No. II ; and

(c) if the answer to (a) is in the negative under what circumstances the election did not take place on the date fixed and what steps the Government have taken in this connexion ?

A.—(a) & (b). Yes.

(c) The poll for the second ward was not held on the date originally fixed as the polling officer took ill and could not be present. The Government issued instructions to the Vice-Chairman to complete the election at a very early date. The poll was actually held on 22nd November 1928 but as even this election was found to be invalid it has been set aside and a fresh election ordered.

Village Panchayats

Amendment of the Village Panchayats Act, 1920.

*1132 Q.—Mr. D. Narayana Raju : Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce a Bill to amend the Village Panchayats Act, 1920 ; and if so, what its main provisions are and when it will be introduced in the Council ; and

(b) whether Government have considered the advisability of conferring judicial functions on panchayats constituted under the Act ?

A.—(a) The draft of the Bill is under scrutiny. Its provisions have not yet been settled. It will be introduced in the Council as early as practicable.

(b) Yes.

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" May I know when the draft Bill was ready and how long has it been under consideration ? "

The hon. Dr. P. Subbarayan :—" The draft Bill was ready about two months ago It has been under scrutiny since then. The conference that met on the Local Boards Bill suggested that village panchayats should be the first unit in local self-government and that this principle ought to be incorporated in the Local Boards Bill."

Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao :—" May I know whether the conclusions of the conference will be put forward in the form of a Bill before this House ? "